



Kim's Weekly Newsletter

WEEK OF:

August 31, 2026 –
September 3, 2026

IMPORTANT MESSAGES:

❖ **NO SCHOOL ON
MONDAY, SEPT. 7TH.**

WE ARE LEARNING ABOUT...

MONDAY: For Small Group Time, the boys and girls followed a recipe at their tables and made playdough. Did you know that playdoh is a hands-on learning tool that builds critical physical, cognitive, and social skills in preschool children? During Large Group Time, we continued to talk about personal spaces. Hula hoops were placed on the floor in the classroom. Each child chose a hula hoop to stand inside of as we sang the song, "The Wheels on the Bus."

TUESDAY: The boys and girls explored with their playdoh during Small Group Time. After a few minutes, cookie cutters, rolling pins, and playdoh hammers were added to their exploration. These materials have been added to our Art Center. Each child chose a scarf during Large Group Time. First, they explored moving with their scarves while sitting on the floor. Next, they found a space in the classroom and explored moving with their scarf while standing.

WEDNESDAY: The children put together a variety of puzzles at their Small Group tables. Did you know that puzzles help boost memory, improve visual-spatial reasoning, reduce stress, build fine-motor skills, and enhance hand-eye coordination? For Large Group Time, each child chose a scarf and found a space in the classroom. We were introduced to the Body Bingo Scarf song and learned more ways to move with our scarves.

THURSDAY: Each child was given half of a paper towel and a cup of bear counters for Small Group Time. The teachers first told a story using the same materials and then encouraged the boys and girls to make up their own stories as they used one-to-one counting while putting the bears on their boats (paper towel). The children were challenged with additional bears for counting and wooden blocks were added to extend their stories. After exploring a variety of ways to move with our scarves, music was played for the children during Large Group Time and they chose their own movements while listening to the music.

STANDARDS

- Maintains focus and sustains attention and minimal adult support.
- Participate in the community of the classroom.
- Persists in tasks.
- Demonstrates increasing control, strength, and coordination of small muscles.
- Knows number names and the count sequence.
- Demonstrates control, strength, and coordination of large muscles.

TEACHER CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Back to School, Back to Bedtime: Why Sleep Routines Matter

By Nikki Eining CSW-PIP, QMHP

If bedtime has drifted an hour or two later over the summer, nothing has gone wrong. Late sunsets, camp schedules, vacations, and relaxed screen rules all nudge a child's internal clock later. Pulling that clock back toward a school-year schedule is real work, and it usually takes a couple of weeks of consistent effort, not one good night. It is also normal to experience some protest, stalling, and a few rough mornings along the way. Sleep problems and irregular bedtimes are extremely common in childhood; roughly 20% to 30% of children are affected by insomnia at some point, so families who struggle with this are in the majority, not the minority.

It is important to be aware of the appropriate amount of sleep for your child's developing body. The American Academy of Pediatrics endorses these nightly sleep targets:

- Preschool (3–5 years): 10–13 hours, including naps
- School age (6–12 years): 9–12 hours
- Teens (13–18 years): 8–10 hours

Sleep is one of the strongest levers parents have over a child's mood and behavior. Getting the recommended hours is linked to better attention, learning, memory, emotional regulation, and mental health, while too little sleep is associated with depression, obesity, and high blood pressure.

The behavioral effects show up quickly. In studies where children's sleep was experimentally extended or restricted, kids sleeping close to 10 hours had better emotional stability, less restless and impulsive behavior at school, and a more positive mood than kids sleeping about 8 hours. Short sleep impairs the brain's "brakes" (impulse control and flexible thinking), which is why an under-slept child melts down over things they would otherwise shrug off.

If you find yourself just beginning to work on nighttime routine and sleep habits, there is good news. Children whose sleep improves over time show measurable declines in both emotional and behavioral problems. Working on sleep is not just damage control; it is an intervention to support wanted emotional and behavioral outcomes.

What are recommended strategies? The American Academy of Pediatrics encourages using the 4Bs. Bathe, brush, books, bed. Using a consistent, predictable, calming sequence in the same order each night signals to the brain and the body that sleep is coming. This works for teens too, in an age-appropriate form.

Keep screens off for at least an hour before bedtime, and keep phones, tablets and TVs out of the bedroom overnight. It is normal for children and teens to play music at night. Instead of using a tablet or a phone, purchase an alarm clock with digital music ability or a radio. Creating a nighttime playlist that can be played nightly is a predictable and consistent habit that signals to the brain and body it is time for sleep.

Consistency is what makes falling asleep and waking up easier. Try to keep weekend and vacation evenings consistent with weekdays.

Sunlight in the morning helps reset the internal clock. Open windows, turn on a light, or even get outside if you can. Monitor caffeine intake. School-age children should not consume caffeine after noon. Common hidden sources include iced tea, chocolate, soda, and certain flavored waters. In a world where energy drinks and Starbucks are popular, educate your adolescent about how caffeine impacts sleep. Research identifies that adolescents consuming energy drinks are 4.5 times more likely to sleep fewer than 6 hours.

As always, annual well-child visits with your Primary Care Physician are vital. This is an opportunity to work together on strategies to support healthy sleep habits and to discuss if your child snores regularly or has pauses in breathing, is very sleepy during the day despite adequate time in bed, takes a long time to fall asleep most nights, or wakes repeatedly. These difficult experiences are treatable, and they deserve evaluation rather than more willpower.

The American Academy of Pediatrics healthychildren.org is a great resource for parents. Under the "Healthy Living" tab, you will find multiple articles and resources on exploring appropriate curfews, bunk bed safety, separation anxiety, and more.